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E2V664UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
*Extension Service*, WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

## VICTORY FARM VOLUNTEERS

March 14, 1946

For your information

TO ALL ASSISTANT STATE FARM LABOR SUPERVISORS, VFV:

Subject: News Letter

## IT'S HIGH TIME....

Looking at the date on our last news letter the other day gave us quite a shock. It seems to have been December.

But we have a long list of excuses in addition to the fact that we got to see most of you in person at the regional conferences. We could cite, for example, the Christmas holidays, a conference of five State VFV supervisors here in Washington, the regional conferences themselves, our present task of issuing 1946 publications, and a grand melee of moving and painting here in South Building. We might add that the VFV office is now a shining example of what paint, floor wax, and spring sunshine can do to bolster morale.

## IT'S STILL AN EMERGENCY PROGRAM

The 1946 Victory Farm Volunteer program is now taking shape, as you know. We have informed directors and State super-

visors that the name---Victory Farm Volunteers--- is being retained for this year. That was one of the most basic decisions that had to be made. It may not suit everyone, but we believe it will satisfy the greatest number of persons. It will certainly avoid the confusion of accustoming school people, parents, youth, newspaper readers, etc., to a new name.

And then there is the fact that 1946 VFV's will be virtually doing a "war job." Granted our enemies surrendered at Reims and at Tokyo Bay, but we've still got a fight on our hands---this time against starvation, uncertainty, and even chaos. Keeping the same name may help denote the emergency nature of the 1946 job.

## FOOD HOLDS THE ANSWER

Speaking of emergency, let's look at the food situation. Your newspaper headlines will tell you the same thing, but here

are some quotes to remember:

"For the world as a whole, a food crisis has developed which may prove to be the worst in modern times."---President Harry S. Truman.

"More people in the world will be hungry and starving this year than at any time during the war."---U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"While the international situation is in the balance, and the domestic scene in one country after another teeters between hope for restoration and fear of political upheaval, three-quarters of the earth's population faces hunger."---William Philip Simms.



"Unless the largest overseas movement of cereals in the world's history can be effected in the weeks and months ahead...the results will be tragic in the extreme."--Roy F. Hendrickson, Deputy Director General of UNRRA.

#### NEW EMPHASIS ON YOUTH BENEFITS

We've mentioned that five VFV State supervisors came to Washington to make some recommendations about a 1946 youth program. The five, who were here in early January, included Russel Adams from Oregon; C. E. Bublitz, Minnesota; Jack Weaver, New York; C. P. Dorsey, West Virginia; and W. L. Brannon, South Carolina. It was mighty interesting to get these folks together. Adams and Bublitz, for instance, had never met the eastern VFV people before, and the exchange of ideas was beneficial for everyone.

The recommendations of this group were presented to most of you at the regional conferences. But it's well to mention here the emphasis most of the States plan to put on the educational value to youth this year. We all know that benefits in the way of broadened experiences accrued to youth during the war. With the end of the war, we lack for no recruiting appeals with this educational theme to fall back on. As a matter of fact, with more emphasis on value to youth we should be able to set up a program with greater protection and learning opportunities for boys and girls. Meanwhile, it appears that the world food crisis and the possibility of voluntary or compulsory food rationing at home will provide a potent enough recruiting appeal.

#### DORSEY LEAVES US FOR WEST VIRGINIA

C. P. Dorsey, who has been with us in the Federal office since last April 1, returned to the Extension staff in West Virginia on the first of the year. Dorsey's first interests have been 4-H Clubs, but he goes back to West Virginia to work on both 4-H and VFV. Needless to say, he goes home with new concern about opportunities for urban youth to get acquainted with farm living and farm people.

Needless to say, too, Dorsey is much missed in our office and has our best wishes in returning to his duties in the Mountaineer State.

#### A GLANCE AT THE STATES

What's actually ahead of us in the VFV program this year is reflected in the reports we got from you State people at the regional conferences--reports about your own plans for 1946.

New York, for instance, will concentrate on its live-ins this year. That's where the big educational value is, believes Jack Weaver....Minnesota may cut down its live-ins this year, but it will be a case of quality replacing quantity, according to Bublitz. And the emphasis will be on live-ins....Pennsylvania and Louisiana are two States we know of that look forward to a larger youth program than before....Both Pennsylvania and South Carolina plan more emphasis on live-ins....Connecticut's camp set-up for shade-tobacco workers will be repeated, with another group of Florida youth to be brought in. Connecticut is also going all out to have an adequately supervised day-haul program out of Hartford to tobacco fields... To date 20 States have assigned someone on the State staff to the youth program.... There seems to be a trend away from emergency closing of schools for farm work. New Jersey, in particular, will follow this policy.



## INSURANCE POLICY FOR 1946

As you recall, the policy offers insurance at \$4 for 3 months, or \$1.50 for 1 month. It pays \$500 for loss of life and from \$500 to \$1,000 for dismemberment or loss of sight. It's available from 31 companies in various sections of the Nation.

The VFV accident insurance policy will again be available. The details of this policy are identical with last year's.

## ABOUT THE CONFERENCES.....

As always, the regional conferences this year were most valuable to me. I've never felt we had enough time to discuss all the phases of our program, and we certainly could use more time profitably.

These things stood out, I think, concerning the over-all national situation.... the farm labor supply will be worse this year than last in some places....there are requests for a good many more foreign workers than are available....the number of war prisoners, if any, will be greatly reduced....volunteer adult workers are not likely to respond as they did during the war....veterans and war workers are not going back to farm work in sufficient numbers....And how does all this add up? It simply appears that the need for youth workers on farms this year will be greater than ever unless there's a drastic change in the situation. It's a big challenge to all of us to have ready the machinery for recruiting boys and girls when and if farmers need them. Youth may be a convenient labor source for last-minute recruiting, but the most successful use of them is never achieved, it seems to me, when plans for selection, placement, and supervision are not laid in advance. I think, too, that we're likely to underestimate the number of VFV's needed this year. If we come up to harvesttime without plans for help from the boys and girls, we may leave some previous crops in the fields.

## WHAT THE DIRECTORS SAY

Here are a few high lights:

You'll be interested in what some of the directors and supervisors had to say about youth at the three conferences.

"Extension has a responsibility in providing work experience for educational purposes to city youth. It's fine for city youth to be on farms away from certain bad situations in many towns and cities and to learn about agriculture. And it's good for agriculture."--Director Bowman, Wyoming.

"The tendency now seems to be for city families to build their homes just outside the cities....Farm work experience and 4-H Club work would be of untold value to the members of such families in addition to providing the farmers with a source of labor during periods of greatest need. In addition, would not Extension be developing a better understanding between rural and urban people?"--Farm Labor Supervisor Waters, Mississippi.

"I am not so sure that we should stress in the future the economic phase of the (youth) program...There is a place for city youth on the farm and it is because of that that I am thinking of something entirely different. That is, this matter of rural-urban relationship...Here is a new approach, and, it seems, if well-handled, city youth will get some wholesome respect for rural life and food production...Farm people will have an opportunity to learn that city youth are the same as rural youth, that city youth are just as willing, just as courteous, and just as honest as rural youth."--Director Frye, Pennsylvania.



## LET THE KIDS DECIDE

You can attribute it to the emergency nature of our program during the war and even this year--but the boys and girls

who have done farm work as VFV's have never had much of a chance to enter into VFV planning. For the most part, this is as it should be. But there are some decisions boys and girls could help us make. In fact, we need their suggestions. That's the way Vermont's Mrs. Martha Buttrick feels. And we're inclined to agree with her.

Mrs. Buttrick thinks the boys and girls might think up something really unique in the way of a name for the VFV's of the future. She is of course interested in continuing this farm work program for its educational values. Bringing the youth into the decision-making should even increase these learning opportunities. If we have another year of the program we'll certainly need a new name. This summer, she suggests, is the time to consult the "kids" and get their viewpoint in time to help us make a decision for next year.

Whatever other States do along this line, Vermont is laying plans now to let the youngsters do more program planning this year. The educational side has been stressed with Vermont's live-ins throughout the war, but Mrs. Buttrick hopes to carry it even further in 1946.

These suggestions are well worth our considering further. What do the rest of you think?

## PUBLICATION COMMUNIQUE

Here's a communique about our VFV publications. Briefly I'll list them and the dates we hope they'll be ready for distribution.

These are the distribution dates we've been promised. But we certainly can't guarantee them.

1. "We're Needed Again"--poster for use in schools; Kodachrome like last year's "Going Our Way," photographed by the same photographer with same boy and girl models. Ready for distribution from Chicago May 1.
2. Poster for use in schools announcing that the school is cooperating in the VFV program. Should be ready by May 1.
3. "Youth Learns and Earns While Helping on Farms"--one-fold illustrated leaflet, envelope size, for distribution to schools with explanations of the need for youth on farms and the benefits derived by youth; intended chiefly for parents and teachers. Ready for distribution from Washington April 15.
4. "Youth Can Help"--two-fold leaflet, envelope size, with actual VFV pictures, for distribution to farmers; describes availability of youth and advantages to farmers in using boys and girls. Ready for distribution from Washington April 22.
5. Revised work leader bulletin--will probably be ready sometime in May.
6. Revised VFV membership cards--will probably be ready by April 15.
7. Revised safety bulletin--tentatively planned for publication by National Safety Council, provided enough States indicate interest in purchasing copies; we'll have to tell you about the date later.



THOSE STATEMENTS FROM EDUCATORS...

We've had some perfectly swell results from our request for statements about VFV from educators. It's thrilling to read what some of these superintendents, principals, and other school people have to say about the program--and from so many sections of the Nation. When there's more time, we'll try to cull some of the best from these statements and sum them up for you in a news letter. And we certainly want to thank those of you who troubled yourselves to get this material for us.

AN INSPIRING NOTE ON SAFETY

From Washington's "Weekly Farm Labor News Letter" of February 5, we quote with pride: "If the record established in this State during 1945 among our youth workers can be used as an example, farm work is safe for youth. Farm labor reports from all counties show that 29,675 different youth were placed on farm jobs during 1945. Although all counties were requested to report all accidents or injuries, not a single case was reported. In nearly all counties, special effort was put forth to see that children were protected.... Our record proves that a very reasonable amount of caution pays big dividends."

PLANS IN MINNESOTA

Minnesota is all set up to carry on a youth program for urban boys and girls as soon as the farm labor program comes to an end.

For those of you who didn't hear C. E. Bublitz tell about it at the St. Louis conference, here are some of the details. An urban youth farm work program will be added as an extracurricular activity to Minnesota's 4-H Club program. Someone designated by the Director would be assigned to the 4-H staff to conduct the urban youth program from the State level. On the county level the county agent could confer with the superintendent or vocational agriculture teacher and then select a leader to organize a club for urban youth who wish to spend their summer vacation on a farm. Each group would hold regular scheduled meetings during the school year. In the three largest cities--Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Duluth, a plan is being prepared for incorporating an urban youth program in the regular high school curriculum.

CAN WE HELP YOU?

This is the time of year you are all laying plans for the busy seasons on the farm. Can we be of any help to you? If a trip to your state seems desirable we can probably arrange that. As always, too, we'll be happy to hear from any of you concerning program developments in your State.

From here on, we have higher hopes for this news letter. If our deeds match our intentions, it should come to you more frequently and more regularly in the future.

Sincerely yours,

*Irvin H. Schmitt*

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(Copy to State supervisors,  
directors, editors)



